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Senate fixes ‘Bad Driver Law,’ provides reimbursement to motorists already fined

Lansing – Legislation waiving a \$300 fee for motorists who fail to show proof of insurance when pulled over has been sent to the House for concurrence, Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks, announced today.

“This bill corrects an oversight in a previous law,” Jelinek said. “It allows a waiving of fines for law abiding citizens who have forgotten a proof of insurance slip at home.”

Jelinek also is encouraged the governor is supporting the legislation.

“It is important that all Michigan drivers maintain their vehicle insurance,” Jelinek said. “We need to do all we can as a state to encourage compliance but not burden those who comply with unfair costs.”

As amended, the bill:

- Allows a driver to appear prior to the appearance date on the citation and show proof that they had auto insurance at the time of the violation. If they do this, no Driver Responsibility fees may be levied.
- Provides for reimbursement of drivers already assessed. The legislation provides drivers with 60 days to appear in court and appeal the court’s ruling that resulted in the assessment being charged in the first place. If drivers prove they had insurance, the fees will be refunded by the Secretary of State.

Jelinek noted that the legislation does not remove the civil infraction for failure to show proof of insurance. This civil infraction has been on the books for years, long before the Driver Responsibility Act. Courts may still assess a \$25 fee for tickets issued, even if a driver appears in court with proof of insurance.

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